



Kingsholm C of E Primary School

Attendance Policy

Written by	Hayley Hanson – Senior Attendance Champion Tracey Gordon – Attendance & Welfare Officer
Reviewed by	Senior Attendance Champion, Attendance Officer
Ratified by	FGB
Ratification date	April 2026
Review cycle	Annual
Next review date	September 2026

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At Kingsholm C of E Primary School, we believe that attendance is everyone's business and is fundamental to safeguarding, wellbeing and achievement. Our School is a place where all children belong. Every child has a right to education and to be heard. It is important we listen to children and acknowledge their needs and concerns. We are committed to a support-first approach, where there are barriers to children attending school, we want to work with our children, parents and carers to 'unpick, understand and support' whatever those challenges may be and work in partnership with parents/carers to address these. We all have a vital role to play in enabling children to be their best. Once we know and understand the contributing negative factors leading to a child's low attendance, only then we can provide the support needed to address these. This support may include and is not limited to school nurse referrals, mental health support, Early Help for families, support with housing challenges and wrap around care opportunities.

Good attendance at school is vital for children to thrive and reach their goals and shine. When at school children can develop key social skills, make progress in their learning and develop life skills that will help them beyond childhood. **We expect pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open.**

The figures and data below show the impact of absence and lates on your child's lesson time:

If your child's attendance during the school year...	Your child would have lost approximately...	or they would have missed approximately...
was 95%	9 Days from School	50 Lessons
was 90%	19 Days from School	100 Lessons
was 85%	29 Days from School	150 Lessons
was 80%	38 Days from School	200 Lessons
was 75%	48 Days from School	250 Lessons

If in a school year, your child is late every day by...	Your child would have lost approximately...	or they would have missed approximately...
5 Minutes	3.5 Days from School	20 Lessons
10 Minutes	7 Days from School	41 Lessons
15 Minutes	10 Days from School	55 Lessons
20 Minutes	14.5 Days from School	82 Lessons
30 Minutes	22 Days from School	123 Lessons

1. Aims of the Policy

Kingsholm C of E Primary School recognises its responsibilities to educate all pupils to their fullest potential. This policy therefore aims to identify how as a school we support all children to achieve the maximum possible attendance.

The policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality for all pupils. Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly, accurately and consistently.
- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.

- Ensure early identification of attendance concerns.
- Provide targeted support where barriers exist.
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements.

2. Strategies used to promote good attendance and punctuality with Pupils and Parents

The expectation is for all pupils to attend every day that the school is open (unless a reason acceptable to the school is given) and that pupils are punctual and ready to learn.

We promote attendance through: A welcoming and inclusive school environment. It is important that every child receives the best possible start to the day, knowing they are welcome and an important part of our Kingsholm community. This is achieved through ensuring that each morning children and families are warmly welcomed on the playground by all staff through our 'meet and greet' agreement. Daily classroom based 'soft starts' and bagel provision mean that children have the opportunity to prepare for the day and ensure their basic needs are met. Only when a child's emotional and social needs are met, can learning be achieved.

Attendance is celebrated by:

1. Weekly Attendance Awards: The class with the highest % attendance in Key Stage 1 receives a certificate and the 'Attendance Pup' spends a week in the classroom. For Key Stage 2 they receive a certificate and a trophy for the week.

2. Termly Attendance Awards: Celebration of attendance with individual awards (stickers, attendance postcards, certificates) for pupils with 100% attendance. In the case of those with complex medical needs where appointments are necessary, awards will be given at the discretion of the Headteacher.

3. Annual Attendance Awards: Those children who achieve 100% attendance for the whole year receive a certificate and a small reward. In the case of those with complex medical needs where appointments are necessary, awards will be given at the discretion of the Headteacher.

4. Improved Pupil Attendance: Pupils who are deemed to have shown a significant improvement in attendance will be awarded a certificate.

Attendance is celebrated in the School newsletter that communicates whole school, weekly year group and class attendance percentages along with important attendance updates. Sharing of attendance takes place with parents and weekly conversations between teachers, parents and children when attendance is improving or becoming a concern.

3. Day to Day Processes

Each school day consists of 2 sessions, am and pm. Pupils should arrive on the school playground from 8:35am so they are ready to line up with their class teacher at 8.45am. The school gates are locked promptly at 8.50am.

Morning registers open in classrooms at 8:50am and close at 9:20am.

If a pupil arrives late for school (after 8.50am), parents/carers must bring pupils to the school office and wait until they have been signed in on the late list by a member of school staff. The school will ask for a reason for being late and this is recorded on the school register. Any pupil who arrives after 8.50am will be marked as late in the register (L code).

Contact home will be made for those children who turn up late for school where no conversation has been had with parents/carers at the time of drop off.

Any pupil who arrives after 9:20am will be marked as unauthorised late in the register (U code) unless the school have been made aware of an acceptable reason for arriving after the morning registers have closed.

If frequent or persistent lateness occurs, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss the matter further with the Attendance Officer.

Registers are open for the pm sessions (after staggered lunches) as follows: Reception 11.30 -12.30, Year 1/2 12:00 – 1.00, Years 3 / 4 12.30 – 1.30 and Years 5 / 6 13:00– 14:00.

Parents/Carers should report absences to the school office by **8.30am**. Absence due to physical or mental illness will be authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Unexplained absence will be followed up by a telephone call home on the morning of the first day of absence to ascertain the reason, and on each subsequent day thereafter where no contact has been made. If the school cannot reach the parent/carer or any of the emergency contacts, a home visit will be made. If a home visit is unsuccessful the school will contact external professionals as a safeguarding concern and/or Local Police to conduct a welfare check. The absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless a valid reason is ascertained. Unauthorised absences may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Parents/carers are asked to not make medical or dental appointments for pupils during school time, if possible. Even though an absence to attend an appointment will be authorised, the missed session will still be reflected in your child's overall attendance data. If the appointment has to be made in school time, please collect your child for the appointment and return them to school to continue their learning. We ask that parents/carers notify the school office with plenty of notice for any appointment that takes place during the school day. Proof of appointment may be requested by the school to authorise the absence.

4. Vulnerable Pupils

Vulnerable pupil's attendance is checked daily and any absences or concerns will be discussed immediately with a Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure any actions are taken at the earliest possible opportunity.

Children who are LAC (Looked After Children) on CiN (Children in Need) or CP (Child Protection) plans will have their attendance checked first each day. Where appropriate social workers and professionals will be informed of the child's absence.

5. Responsibilities

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

We encourage parent/carers to promote an ethos with their children/family which places a high value on good attendance and punctuality. We would ask parent/carers to support by:

- Making sure your child gets enough sleep so they are able to wake up in plenty of time to get ready for school and eat a good breakfast;
- Ensure your child attends every day and on time - arrive on the school playground between 08.35 and 08.50;
- Contact the school as soon as possible in the morning if your child will not be attending school and each subsequent day of absence, stating the reason;
- Make sure that your child attends school wearing the correct uniform and brings appropriate kit and provision for lunch;
- Help your child by showing an interest in school life;
- If your child appears reluctant to attend school, contact the child's class teacher immediately to discuss any concerns.
- Work with school to unpick and explore the barriers to attendance for your child and engage with the support and intervention offered to address these.

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments are made outside of the school day
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance

Pupil Responsibilities

To help foster independence we encourage all children to 'be their best' by supporting the following:

- Attend school every day on time, ready to start learning



School Responsibilities

All staff at Kingsholm C of E Primary School will support families to ensure good attendance and punctuality for all children. Staff will therefore support this by:

- Monitor attendance daily.
- Ensuring that registers are marked accurately and promptly every day;
- Differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence – a letter from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence;
- Responding to those children who are absent with care, compassion and understanding;
- Contacting parents when concerned about a pupil's absence and making a record of this on CPOMS;
- Offering support and early intervention to address the barriers to attendance for individual children;
- Consulting with the Safeguarding Lead and/or Local Authority if a pupil's attendance gives any cause for concern;
- Acknowledging good or improved attendance of individual pupils.

The Governing Body are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote this across the school's ethos and policies, regularly reviewing attendance data and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.

6. School Monitoring Procedures

The Attendance Officer monitors the attendance of children on a daily basis and particularly those whose attendance is a concern. Prompt action is taken including home visits where necessary.

The Senior Attendance Champion works closely with the Attendance Officer to monitor pupil attendance on a weekly basis. During this monitoring individual classes and children will be identified for further support. Each week class teachers are made aware of any pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern or has recently fallen.

The following stages of support are offered to improve individual attendance:

Support Stage 1

- The school will closely monitor individual attendance and contact parents/carers for any unexplained absences. The Attendance Officer will communicate with parents/carers to clarify any reasons for absence or to raise any identified patterns of absence. This may result in a home visit.
- Parents/carers will be contacted by class teachers to discuss attendance barriers and challenges so targeted and bespoke support can be offered where appropriate.
- Support may be offered in relation to illness, (school nurse referral), mental health/anxiety, (professional agency signposting) or changes to home/financial circumstances, (pastoral support.)

Support Stage 2

- Continued conversations with the Class Teacher, (SEND/CO where appropriate) to identify any barriers to attendance.
- Meeting/conversations with the Attendance Officer and/or Senior Attendance Champion about what further intervention support could be offered based on the individual needs of the family.
- An Informal Attendance My Plan (IAMP) may be agreed during the meeting and shared with class teachers, reviewed regularly and recorded on CPOMS.
- If there is no improvement, then stage 3 will also be implemented.

Support Stage 3

- Parents/carers will be invited to attend a meeting to formalise support and targets where an Attendance Contract will be put in place. Early Help support will be offered to the family.
- If there is no improvement or attendance is still a cause for concern, then stage 4 will be implemented.

Support Stage 4

- Parents/Carers may be invited to a formal Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM). The AIM will set out targets and expectations to improve school attendance and/or punctuality. It is a formal agreement between the school, pupil and parent/carer and is reviewed at regular meetings. The Local Authority are notified of all pupils who have an AIM. If there is no improvement following the implementation of the formal AIM then school will move to stage 5.

Support Stage 5 – no progress after informal support and formalised attendance contracts

- A referral to the Education Inclusion team will be made.

- Legal proceedings may take place.
- Where attendance is below 50% a discussion will be held with other professionals to see what support can be given to the family to address this depending on circumstances. Non-engagement would be cause for concern and instigate further action.

7. Persistent absence

Following the DfE guidance, any child's attendance which is below 90% will be categorised as persistently absent - this is approx. 20 days absence throughout the academic year.

Parents/carers of children at risk of being persistently absent will be contacted and support offered. The level of support offered will be determined by the need of the parent/carer and pupils and the rate of absence and/or lateness. We recognise that as a school we need to 'listen and understand' before suggesting possible support and agreeing with parents/carers what progress will look like. We as a school commit to facilitating agreed support in partnership with yourselves.

8. Planned Leave of Absence during term time

The DfE advice states that parents should not remove children from a school for a leave of absence during term time. If a parent wishes to request permission for any planned absence during term time they must fill in a "Request for a Leave of Absence During Term Time" form at least 7 days prior to taking the planned absence. The form can be obtained from the school office or filled in electronically on the school website.

Any such requests received will be considered on an individual basis following guidelines issued by the DfE and the Local Authority. The school reserves the right to refuse to authorise any planned leave of absence requests if any of the below reasons apply:

- They are not considered to meet **exceptional circumstances**
- They interfere with assessment tests
- The pupil concerned has poor attendance

The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. The final decision is at the Headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- Attending a medical or dental appointment that cannot be made outside of the school day (proof of appointment may be requested)
- Studying for a public exam
- Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
- Compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
- Parent travelling for occupational purposes where the pupil is a mobile child and their parent / carer is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents / carers belong. If necessary the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

If a pupil is absent from school without permission the absence will be classed as unauthorised. Absence will also be unauthorised if a child does not return to school on the agreed date. Unauthorised absence could trigger the Local Authority being contacted by the school to issue a Notice to Improve or a Fixed Penalty Notice.

9. Fixed Penalty Notices

What is a Notice to Improve?

You may receive a Notice to Improve from the Local Authority when your child's absence has been marked as unauthorised for 10 sessions within 10 weeks. The sessions do not need to be consecutive. The weeks may be in different terms. *The Notice to Improve will set out the school's expectations with regards to your child's attendance during the notification period.*

What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?

A Fixed Penalty Notice is a fine which may be issued by the Local Authority for unauthorised absences from school. Failure to pay a Fixed Penalty Notice will initiate legal proceedings which may lead to prosecution.

When might a Fixed Penalty Notice be issued?

You may face a Fixed Penalty Notice for the following reasons:

- If your child is absent from school, without authorisation from the Headteacher, for the purposes of a holiday. *For a holiday taken in term time, there is no requirement for a school to issue a Notice to Improve notification or warning notice.*
- If your child is persistently late for school, after the register has closed and does not have authorisation from the Headteacher.
- If your child is absent from the school for 10 sessions within a 10 week period and there are no reasons provided or exceptional circumstances for the Headteacher to authorise the absence.
- If your child, following a fixed term suspension, is found in a public place, without a justifiable reason for being there, during school hours on a school day during the first 5 days of a fixed term suspension or a permanent exclusion. The school will have sent you a letter at the time of the fixed term suspension detailing your responsibilities during this period. For this fixed penalty notice, the cost will be £60 for the 21 days after it is issued. If you pay after the 21-day period, but within 28 days, the fine to pay is £120.

How is a Fixed Penalty Notice issued?

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority at the request of the school. You will receive the Fixed Penalty Notice by post to your home address with instructions on how to pay. Fines are usually issued to each parent for each child. (This is subject to the parent who is responsible for not ensuring the child's regular attendance). A parent is defined in Education Law as:

- All natural parents, whether married or not
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person. The fact that you do not live with the child is not a defence against securing their attendance at school.

What is the cost of the fine?

- For the first offence within a rolling three-year period, the Penalty Notice allows you 21 days to pay an £80 fine. If you pay after the 21-day period, but within 28 days, the fine to pay is £160. If the fine remains unpaid at this stage, the LA will usually initiate legal proceedings against you.
- For a second offence within a rolling three-year period, there is no opportunity to pay the fine at the lower amount. Instead, the fine will be at £160.
- If there is a request for a third penalty notice, prosecution will be considered if two penalty notices have been served in any rolling three-year period.

What happens if I do not pay the fine?

You will have 28 days to pay the Fixed Penalty Notice in full. If you fail to pay the fine in this timeframe, the Local Authority will usually initiate legal proceedings against you for failing to

secure regular attendance for your child registered at a school. If you are convicted of this offence, there are several possible sentences, including a fine of up to £1,000.

Is there an appeal process?

There is no right of appeal. Once a Fixed Penalty Notice has been issued, it can only be withdrawn if it can be shown that it was issued in error.

What happens if the Fixed Penalty Notice is paid, but my child still misses school?

Parents/carers are not liable for prosecution for their child's school attendance for the period in question once the Fixed Penalty Notice is paid. However, prosecution may be considered for further periods of absence not covered by the notice.

10. Children Missing from Education (CME)

Children Missing Education (CME) refers to 'any child of compulsory school age who is not registered at any formally approved education activity e.g. school, alternative provision, elective home education, and has been out of education provision for at least 4 weeks'.

CME also includes those children who are missing (family whereabouts unknown) and are usually children who are registered on a school roll/alternative provision. This might be a child who is not at their last known address and either:

- has not taken up an allocated school place as expected, or
- has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or
- left school suddenly and the destination is unknown

Additional information and guidance on this subject can be found at:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/children-missing-education/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Senior Attendance Champion: Hayley Hanson

Attendance Officer: Tracey Gordon

Attendance Link Governor: Nina Hargrave

Policy reference material, guidance or link policies	* Safeguarding Policy * Department for Education - Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance for schools and colleges * Department of Education – Children Missing from Education * Gloucestershire.gov.uk - education-and-learning/school-attendance-and-exclusions-and-welfare/attendance-and-absence-from-school. * Gloucestershire.gov.uk - schoolsnet/your-pupils/children-missing-education * Local Authority – Skeleton Attendance Policy
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